

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Initially, applicants note the specification is amended by the present response to correct minor informalities. The changes to the specification are seemed to be self-evident from the original disclosure, and thus are not deemed to raise any issues of new matter.

The certified priority document is also submitted herewith.

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,580,537 to Chang et al. (herein "Chang").

Addressing first the rejection of claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Applicants initially note that each of the claims is amended by the present response to clarify features recited therein, and specifically to clarify the subject matter being claimed.

With respect to the specific rejection to claim 1 in prenumbered paragraph 5 of the Office Action, claim 1 is amended to clarify that the generated optical pulses have both different wavelengths and deviated time axis positions, to clarify that subject matter.

With respect to the rejections to claim 8 in paragraph 6 of the Office Action, claim 8 is amended by the present response to clarify that the address signals includes "optical pulses having different wavelengths and being identified by wavelength information delimited by a predetermined waveband width and predetermined time different information included in optical packets".

Further, with respect to claims 11 and 12, those claims are believed to be proper as those claims recite that the routers switch optical signals in accordance with differences in "combinations of multiple optical pulse wavelengths and time differentials included in

address signals". Thus, those claims are believed to be clear and directed to similar subject matter as in claim 1.

With respect to the rejection of claim 10 noted in paragraph 7 of the Office Action, claim 10 is amended to clarify features recited therein, and to no longer recite the phrase "the reduced-bandwidth pulse signals".

In view of the presently submitted claim amendments and the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that each of the claims is in full compliance with all requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Chang, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Chang discloses in Figure 12 a structure in which address signals converted into electrical signals are input in parallel to a plurality of decision circuits 1224 to switch an optical switch. While the address signals before being converted into electrical signals are given in the form of sub-carriers for optical signals, the Office Action takes the position that the address signals can be given in the form of optical signals having independent frequencies rather than sub-carriers. However, applicants submit that even with such a modification in the device of Chang, the teachings in Chang do not meet the claim limitations.

More specifically, the claims as currently written are not directed to a feature that address signals are given in the form of optical signals having independent frequencies. Instead, the claims as currently written allow that address signals can be given in a form of signal dot distribution on a two-dimensional plane that can be defined by a frequency axis and a time axis. Such a benefit can be obtained through execution of a first operation to impart a wavelength dependent delayed time to a plurality of optical pulses having different wavelengths at a same time axis position. Such a first operation results in conversion of

optical packet address signals to a plurality of optical pulses having different wavelengths and having deviated time axis positions.

Such features clarified in the claims are believed to clearly distinguish over the teachings in Chang, even in view of the proposed modification of Chang noted in the Office Action.

In such ways, applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-12 patentably distinguish over the applied art to Chang.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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